(b) whether the lower estimate now reflects the country's inability to add to its proven oil reserves;

(c) if so, what are the concrete steps and measures Government proposes to take to improve the position in future; and

(d) whether any concrete measure is being considered in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (d) BP statistical review of world energy 2007 has pointed out that reserve to production (R/P) ratio for India is 19.3 years at current rate of production and assuming that no reserves are added in next 19 to 20 years. In last five years, reserve replacement ratio (RRR) in India was more than one, which means, oil companies in India have accreted more reserves than their oil and gas production. The balance recoverable reserve position in 2002-03 was about 1485.73 million metric tonnes of oil and oil equivalent of gas (MMTOE), which has increased to 1843.15 MMTOE in 2006-07 achieving an increase of 24%.

In order to enhance hydrocarbon security for the country, the significant steps initiated by the Government and public sector undertakings for meeting the demand of petroleum products in the country, *inter alia* include:

(i) incerasing exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and exploring new areas, especially in deep waters and difficult frontier areas, as also the deeper layers of already producing fields;

(ii) improving the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes;

(iii) developing newly discovered fields speedily and stepping up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, stimulation operations, drilling of wells, etc., in producing areas;

(iv) acquisition of oil and gas assets abroad in order to ensure hydrocarbon security for the country;

(v) Exploring potential of alternate sources;

(vi) Conservation of petroleum products.

Delay in flights due to fog

†*169. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flights delayed or deferred due to fog in the year 2006-07;

(b) the extent of loss to passengers and airlines due to deferment of these flights;

(c) whether Government proposes to install systems at airports to overcome the problems caused by fog; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Delays/Diversions occur due to many reasons including fog. All airlines do not maintain record about the loss incurred by them on this count. Hence, it would not be possible to furnish specific information.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) Being a natural phenomenon, occurrence of fog cannot be avoided. However, for maintaining continuity of flight operations at various airports, CAT-II and CAT-III system have already been installed. These systems permit operation in low visibility upto 350 meters in the case of CAT-II system and upto 50 meters in the case of CAT-III system. Besides, the availability of CAT-II and CAT-III trained pilots has increased considerably in the country. The number of DGCA authorised pilots has increased from 809 in the year 2005 to 1660 in 2007 (till November).

Standby X-ray machines at metro airports

*170. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the logic in having standby X-ray machines at metro airports in the country despite shortage of space; and

(b) if it is not rationale, whether Government would stop such practice, which is national waste?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) X-ray machines are used for non-invasive screening of passengers' baggages by security staff at the airports. These X-ray machines, like other elector-mechanical equipment, are prone to unserviceable contingencies.

During such contingencies, preventive and/or breakdown maintenance, the relevant X-ray machine is not available for use. Repair of X-ray machine sometimes takes long hours. During this period, operation of flight at the airport gets affected. In order to overcome the problem, standby X-ray machines have been provided at major airports.

All the security related equipment have been installed as per the requirements and technical specifications prescribed by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).

(b) Does not arise.

Exposure of public sector banks to realty and capital market sectors

* 171. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the public sector banks, because of their increased exposure to realty and capital market sectors, would suffer in the event of repetition of boom-burst cycles;

(b) if so, whether any measures have been initiated to contionuously monitor the situation and plug the systemic problems that may crop up and advise the banks to reduce their exposure to the said sector;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) The exposure of public sector banks (PSBs) to real estate and capital market sectors has increased during the period March, 2006 to March, 2007. However, the growth of such exposure, as a percentage of gross advances, is marginal.